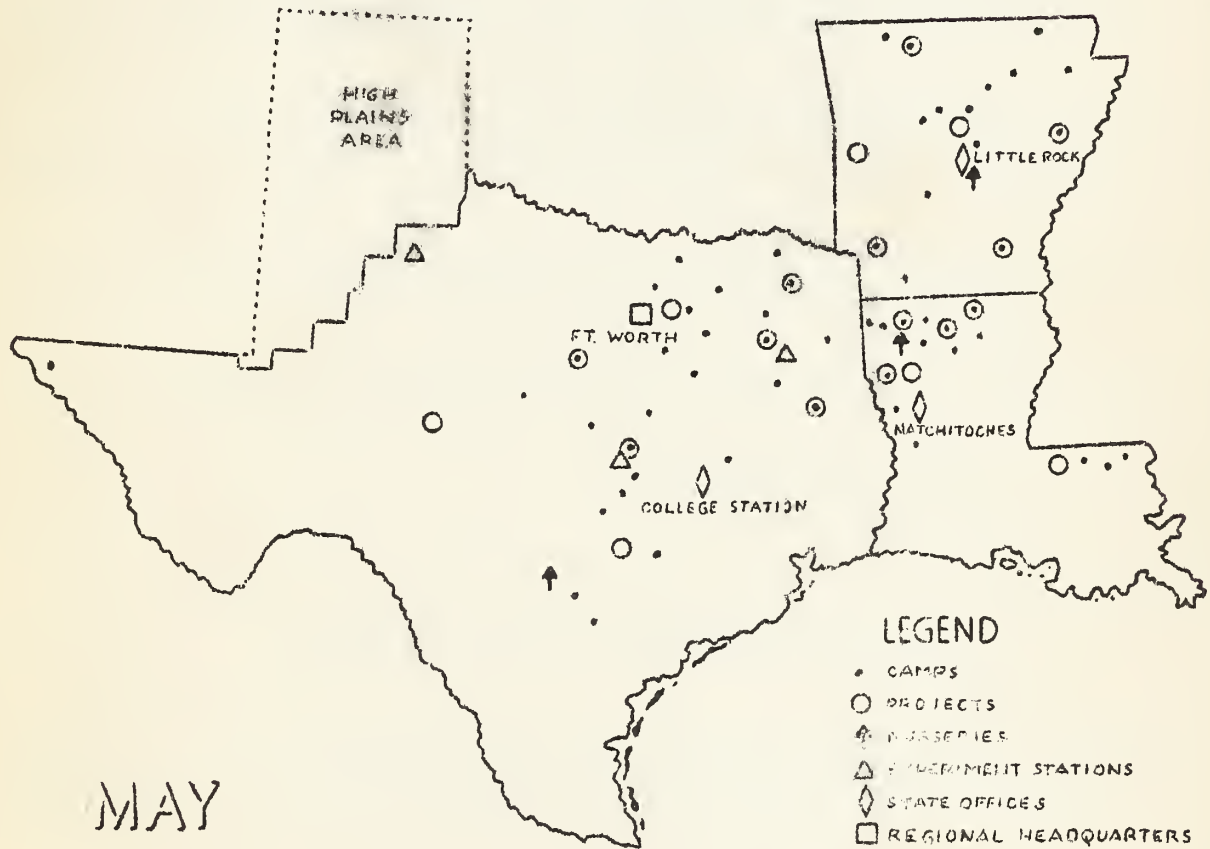


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SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

NEWS



REGION 4
COMPRISING STATES OF LOUISIANA,
ARKANSAS, AND TEXAS EXCEPT
HIGH PLAINS AREA

ENROLLEE HELPS IN SPREAD OF EROSION
CONTROL PRACTICES

After being subjected to a hard rain the terraces planned and laid off by Pat Ray on his father's farm in Caldwell Parish stood up well. Mr. Ray's only source of information was the training he had received while in the line running crew at the Soil Conservation Service Camp at Calhoun, Louisiana.

Mr. Ray's father had seen the work of the Soil Conservation Service and had wished that his farm could benefit from such a program; but he was not located in a project or camp area.

While on a visit home, Pat ran the lines for his father's terraces, using an instrument which he had borrowed from a Vocational Agricultural Teacher; and his father constructed the terraces with his own teams.

When Mr. Ray's terraces proved so satisfactory, his neighbor requested that Pat run the necessary lines on his farm. Pat did so and the farmer constructed these terraces according to his instructions.

These farms are located in Caldwell Parish, near Columbia, Louisiana, and are forty miles from the Calhoun Camp.

- Project La-5,
Farmerville, Louisiana.

WILDLIFE PLANTINGS CONTROLLING EROSION

"In addition to furnishing food and cover, coral berry and himalaya plants offer one of the best means of controlling erosion," was a statement made by Mr. John B. Abington, a farmer cooperating with the Soil Conservation Service in Grand Cane Creek Watershed.

This observation was made while inspecting these plants on gully banks planted less than two months ago. The amount of soil held by these plants was measured and found to vary from three to six inches in depth. Through the process of silting, a better grade of soil was deposited which further aided the growing of grasses and clovers.

- Project La-2,
Mansfield, Louisiana.

SUGGEST THAT COOPERATORS STUDY AGREEMENTS

Farms on which the Soil Conservation Service is doing work in the Pretty Creek Watershed and attached camp areas are covered by definite agreements, in which the Service and the Cooperator agree to do certain definite jobs during the life of the agreement.

These jobs are outlined after a thorough study of the farm set-up and the most practical and effective erosion control practices have been decided upon. Everything listed in these agreements has a definite purpose and place in the program. Cooperators should not only know how to do the job, but should understand why the job is being done. In many instances different fields on a certain farm require entirely different treatments and often cooperators go ahead with the treatment without realizing the purpose of such treatment and may fail on some minor point that is most vital to the job.

It behooves all cooperators to study every field on their farms, know the treatment agreed upon by both the cooperator and the Service, and study the definite purpose for such treatment.

Farmers often desire the technical assistance of men in the Service for certain definite details and come to the office for such assistance. We would suggest that cooperators call at the offices of the project and camps for any assistance they desire in clearing up anything they do not understand regarding their agreement.

- Project Ia-3,
Clinton, Louisiana.

FENCED OUTLETS - A PHASE OF CHANNEL MAINTENANCE

An effort is being made to fence all channel outlets that are connected with pastures or grazing lands and also those channels that are conveniently located for calf pastures. By the use of this fencing, controlled grazing may be obtained. This controlled grazing will keep down tall grasses and weeds which otherwise would tend to choke up the water passage.

The object of fences is to protect the outlets from wagons being driven down them and also from dragging plows. This will tend to cause gullies to form in the channel and thereby hinder the work for which this channel has been intended. Livestock should be allowed to graze these outlets only on dry days of the summer season and should be kept out during the wet periods. If livestock is not kept out during the wet days, the sod

will be cut by numerous trails and water will be diverted from the wide bottom of the channel and form a small gully in the center of the outlets.

As another means for proper maintenance of outlet channels, four foot strips of close-growing crops are being planted on the shoulders. The purpose of these strips is to keep the soil from being washed into the channel and eventually filling it up. The ends of plowed furrows should not extend closer than five to six feet of the outlet or that distance planted to close-growing crops on the shoulders.

- Project La-6,
Ruston, Louisiana.

TERRACES AND GAS MOUNDS

In North Louisiana many fields which need to be terraced are full of so called gas mounds. These mounds present problems both in running terrace lines and in building the terraces.

In order to prevent the terraces in such fields from being so crooked that it would be impossible to cultivate the crops, the terrace lines can be marked off straight across some of these mounds. Of course, this necessitates cutting the channel down at these places.

No matter whether the terraces are to be built with a grader or with a plough, it is better to do the cutting before the terraces are built. The channel lines should be cut through the mounds with a slip and the soil removed from the channels should be dumped into the body of the terraces between the mounds. This tends to fill the low places before the terraces are built.

Doing this work before the terraces are built will make a nicer job because, unless extra care is taken, the shape of the terraces will be ruined in making these cuts and fills on completed terraces.

Of course, the channels should be checked again after the terraces are finished to determine whether they need more work.

- Project La-1,
Minden, Louisiana.

PROTECT SEED-MULTIPLICATION PLOTS

Some of the one-acre seed-multiplication plots are not being protected from grazing.

The purpose of these plots is to provide a means for furnishing pasture grass and legume seed for the regular pasture area. When heavily grazed before seed is formed, the purpose of these seed-multiplication plots is defeated. A good cover of desirable grasses and legumes on pastures is essential for controlling erosion and furnishing an abundance of good cheap feed for livestock. Controlled grazing on these pasture plots is desirable after seed has matured. Seed will be carried by the animals to other pasture areas. Another method of getting seed from these seed plots to pasture area is to cut the mature plants and scatter small bunches of the hay over the pasture. The seed will be carried down the slope by rainwater, thus giving a wider distribution of seed.

The hop and white clovers are now in bloom. The bur clover is forming seed. If heavily grazed at this time, a valuable seed crop will be destroyed.

- Project Ark-4,
Monticello, Arkansas.

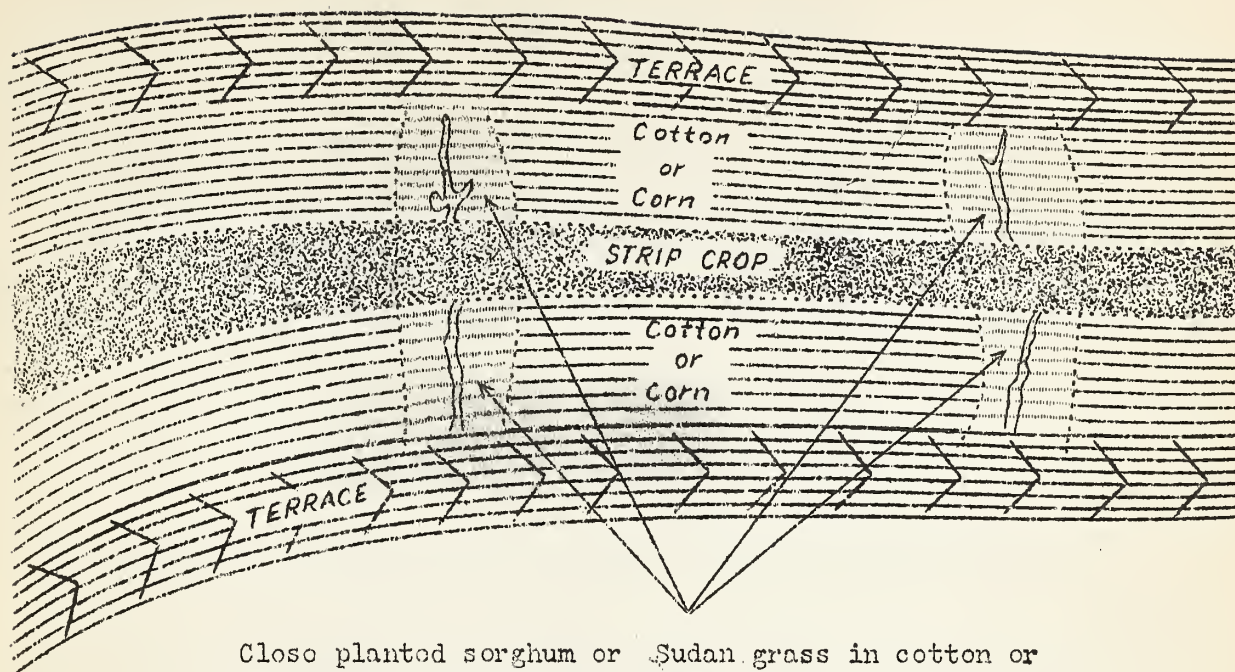
CULTIVATION OF BLACK LOCUST

Now is the time to cultivate your black locust trees. Early cultivation is very essential to the growth of the black locust seedlings. The cultivation destroys early growth of competing vegetation, pulverizes the soil, and aids in conserving the moisture, which is very essential later in the summer season. The conservation of moisture is very important to young tree growth, as the young trees require large quantities of water during the first season.

Any method of cultivation that is most suitable for you to use is satisfactory. You may use a turning plow, side harrow, single stock, or any implement that will pulverize the soil. All plantings of locust should be cultivated once or twice.

A row of cowpeas can be planted between each row of locust.

- Project Ark-4,
Monticello, Arkansas.



Close planted sorghum or Sudan grass in cotton or corn rows-- across the depression for stubble to hold the soil in the rows and level up the depression.

STOPPING SMALL GULLIES IN CULTIVATED FIELDS

Small gullies are continually starting in cultivated fields. Terracing and strip cropping prevent those gullies from ever becoming large, but they still move soil down to the strip and to the terrace flow line.

These depressions can be eliminated by sowing them down with some fibrous rooted crop, such as sudan grass, sorghum, millet, etc. at the time you are chopping your corn or cotton.

This sowing should be done by hand, seeding the full length across the depression. Depressions seeded in this manner have filled up in one crop season.

The accompanying diagram illustrates this method of seeding gullies. Cooperator, please try this practice this year and see for yourself the value.

- Conway, Arkansas,
Project Ark-1.

HELPING TO SAVE THE ROADS IN KENEDY
CAMP AREA

None of the 200 miles of terraces constructed in cooperation with the SCS Program discharge into road ditches but all have specially prepared outlets which are protected principally with sod, meadow grasses. The area thus protected against serious soil losses exceeds 4000 acres.

- Project Tex-4,
Lockhart, Texas.

PLAN NOW FOR GREEN PASTURES NEXT WINTER

Recent observations in Project and Camp areas reveal that several desirable winter pasture plants are producing good seed crops. Patches of Rescue Grass, Italian Rye Grass, Bur Clover and other clovers can be found along highways, county roads, railroad right-of-ways, fence rows, in pastures protected from grazing, and in lawns and vacant lots in towns.

Many cooperators plan to gather these seed for overseeding permanent pastures. Since these seed are expensive if purchased (rescue grass 18 to 20 cents per pound and clover 12 to 24 cents per pound), a farmer receives good wages for time spent in gathering them. Furthermore, the time spent pays dividends in increased carrying capacity of pastures in winter and in erosion control. These seed can be gathered by stripping by hand or by gathering the entire plant as hay by mowing and raking or by the use of a scythe.

Extreme care should be taken in curing and storing these seed since they are easily damaged by heat. As the seed are gathered they should be spread in the shade, preferably on a wagon sheet, and stirred several times a day for a period of at least ten days.

Planting should be done in late summer to insure early fall growth. Separate plantings of the various species is recommended if seed collection is planned from these areas the following year. On contour ridged pastures and on temporary pastures, these separate plantings may be done to produce a strip cropping effect which will eventually result in a pasture mixture over the entire area.

Cooperators are urged to locate and collect these seed. Ask your contact man for information concerning identification, location, collecting, curing and planting.

- Project Tex-8,
Dublin, Texas.

SEASONAL JOBS FOR COOPERATORS

1. All strip crop areas not seeded should be seeded at once so as to be ready for the heavy rainfall periods in May and June.
2. Border strips of broadcast crops should be planted around all cultivated fields.
3. All field gullies and washes should be manured and heavily seeded to broadcast crops. This seeding can be done by using a drill, broadcasting by hand or by carrying a bucket of seed on the cultivator for use in seeding as gullies are crossed in regular tillage operations.
4. The latter part of May is a fine time to do the first mowing of woods. The first crop should be mowed high so they will not "stool" out. A few cooperators are already mowing their pastures.
5. The first rainy "spell" will be a fine time to complete all contour ridges and to clean pastures of brush, briars, stumps and prickly pear for mowing.
6. Bermuda sod should be disced immediately after a rainy period. This is observed to be necessary to get a quick growth and spread on areas which have been seeded. You will be well paid in increased pasturage for time spent in discing all land seeded to Bermuda grass.
7. Black locust trees should be kept cultivated. All trees were put in rows this year so this can be done. Cultivation will insure a higher percentage of living trees and will hasten their growth.
8. Collection and storage of native grasses and clovers, such as rescue grass, rye grass, bur clover and sweet clover for overseeding pasture and meadow land.
9. Plow in gully banks for sodding and vegetation.
10. Cut woods in outlet channels and meadow strips to prevent reseeding and silting.

- Tex-8 Project,
Dublin, Texas.

RESCUE GRASS FOR EROSION CONTROL AND
WINTER GRAZING

By

E. A. Hodson,
Regional Agronomist.

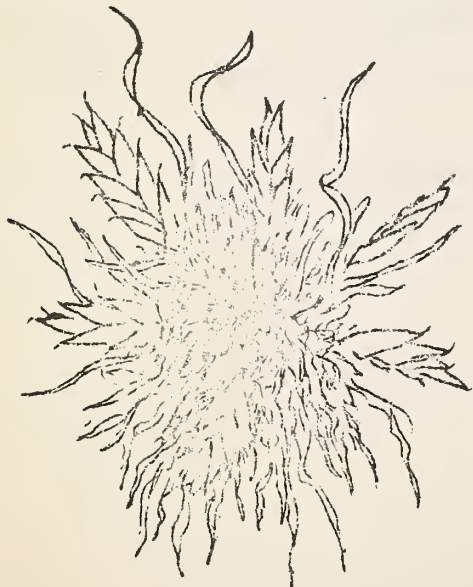
Rescue grass apparently answers some of the questions in regard to vegetation for protection of pastures against erosion during winter months when other pasture grasses are dormant. During the winter months heavy rains may cause gullying and sheet washing in pastures which do not as a rule have a good grass cover.

In addition to erosion protection there is another problem concerned in the balancing of forage crop production with the feed requirements of livestock during the winter season, since there is a very serious gap in the permanent pasture program during the winter months.

This gap can be filled to a limited extent by using the small grains for erosion control and for temporary winter pasture. But these grains have to be resodded each year, except oats in limited areas.

Rescue (*Bromus cathartacus*) is a promising grass to supply protection against erosion and also supplementary grazing during the winter months in areas where it is adapted. Rescue is winter hardy, makes a favorable growth on poor land and will grow on a wide variety of soil types. It also has the distinct advantage of resodding under heavy grazing. Nor is it injured from the standpoint of erosion control under heavy grazing because of its close groundgrowth.

The accompanying sketch shows the habit of growth which rescue develops to produce seed when grazed to the ground by sheep.



Top View



Side View

Rescue is found extensively along highways, ditch banks, fence rows and on idle land throughout much of Region 4. Cooperators should be encouraged to save seed for erosion control and winter pasturage plantings in areas where it is available.

The market demand for rescue seed has never been very large and for that reason the supply is usually limited and it is sold at a price that would prohibit its use to any great extent.

The seed should be fully mature when harvested and must be thoroughly cured in the shade before storing. This will require that the seed be spread in a thin layer and stirred frequently until cured. The seed may be harvested and threshed like oats or if only a small quantity is to be harvested they may be stripped by hand. A small amount of seed will serve to establish this grass in plots to be used as a source of seed for future use where it can be used to advantage.



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